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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/563,015	12/28/2005	Alfredo Poloni	NOTAR -028US	3951
7663	7590	12/08/2006		
STETINA BRUNDA GARRED & BRUCKER 75 ENTERPRISE, SUITE 250 ALISO VIEJO, CA 92656				
			EXAMINER TRAN, LEN	
			ART UNIT 1725	PAPER NUMBER
DATE MAILED: 12/08/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/563,015

Applicant(s)

POLONI ET AL.

Examiner

Len Tran

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 December 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

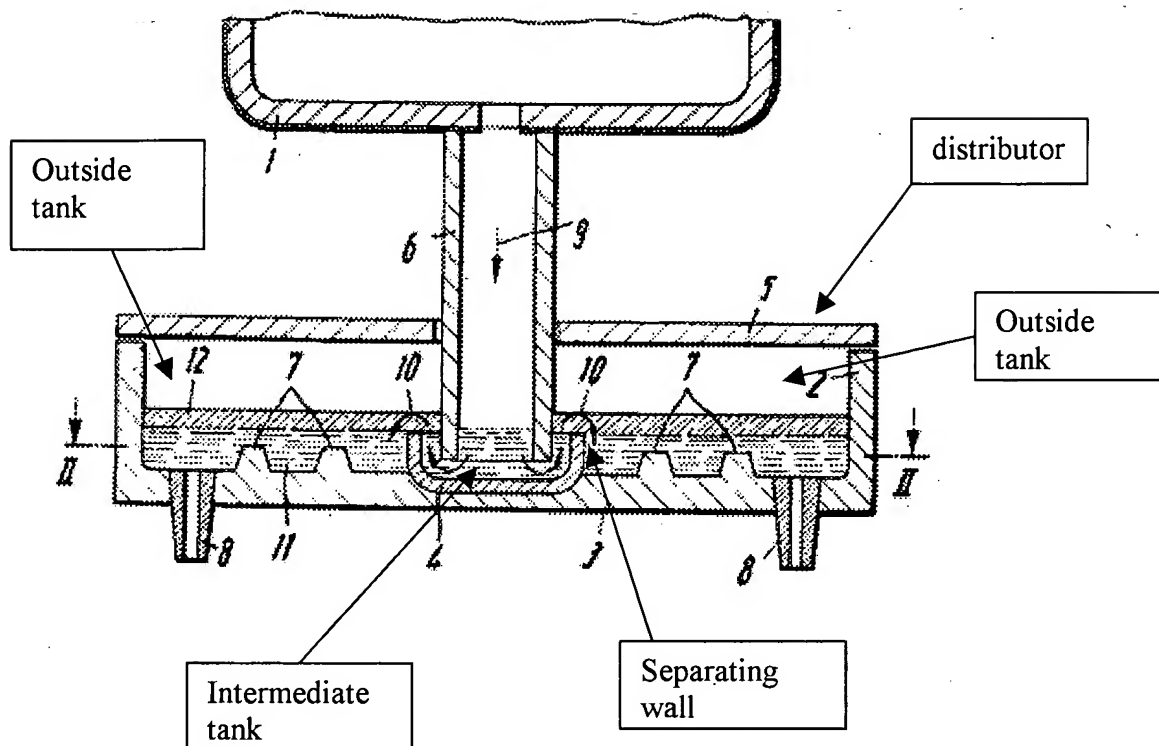
2. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

3. Claims 1, 2, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neuhaus (US 3,887,171), and further in view of Takeuchi et al (US 4,830,090).

Neuhaus discloses a drop feed device for feeding an ingot mold with molten metal comprising a distributor having substantially prismatic shape, with one opening, in which the inside of the distributor comprises at least 3 tanks, of which the first two tanks are arranged at the

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end of the distributor and at least one further tank is set in an intermediate position with respect to the tow first tank by respective separating walls.



Neuhas fails to teach holes on the separating walls. However, Takeuchi et al disclose an opening (11) for the purpose of preventing solid from the top and bottom of the intermediate tank to flow to the outside tank (col. 3, lines 15-23 and figures).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to an ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made have holes on the separating walls as taught by Takeuchi et al, in

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Neuhas, in order to avoid unwanted product to the outside tank, since the outside tank is for final casting step.

4. Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neuhas (US '171) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Knepe et al (US 2002/0029865).

Neuhas discloses the claimed invention above, but lacks the mentioning of a further distributor between the first distributor and the mold.

However, Knepe et al disclose the second distributor (3) for the purpose of casting clean metal.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to an ordinary skill in the art at the time applicant's invention was made to use more than two distributors as taught by Knepe et al, in Neuhas's apparatus, in order to clean the molten metal prior to casting.

5. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neuhas (US '171) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Poloni et al (US 5,716,538).

Neuhas discloses the claimed invention above, but lacks the mentioning of discharger walls less than 7 degrees.

However, Poloni et al disclose the discharger should not be more than 15 degrees for the purpose of reducing turbulence during feeding (col. 4, lines 65-67).

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Therefore, it would have been obvious to an ordinary skill in the art to have the discharger less than 15 degrees as taught by Poloni et al, in Neuhas's apparatus, in order to lessen the amount of turbulence during feeding.

Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Len Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-1184. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:30 - 5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached on 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Len Tran
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1725



December 7, 2006